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might connect Shebbeare's *Marriage Act* (1756), omitted, though *Lydia* (1755) is discussed, and the anonymous *Corporal Bates* (1756), with the satire of early Utopias and *voyages imaginaires*, and with the novels of political and social reform of the last quarter of the century. As a whole the volume savors too much of the subjective criticism popular a generation ago from which the study of modern English literature is just beginning to recover.

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THE THEORY OF ENVIRONMENT. By Armin Hajman Koller, Ph.D. The Collegiate Press, Menasha, Wisconsin, 1918.

The influence of environment upon man has received most attention on the part of French authors and thinkers, and so Dr. Koller is perhaps justified in presenting by way of introduction a number of definitions, not of the term 'environment' but of the *Meanings of the Word Milieu*. He makes no comment on the different interpretations given to the term 'milieu' by various authorities, and, being interested only in the historical side of the problem, he does not attempt to define milieu or environment in language of his own. On the whole the various authorities cited show no great divergence in their conceptions. The inquisitive reader, however, is apt to raise a question here and there. The positivist Auguste Comte, for instance, defines milieu as *l'ensemble total des circonstances extérieures d'un genre quelconque nécessaires à l'existence de chaque organisme déterminé*. *Nécessaires!* The use of the term implies the presence, or at least the possibility of the presence, of the unnecessary. Does the latter not also constitute a part of the milieu? In many instances conditions that exert a detrimental influence upon the organism in question are really the most important part of its milieu. From what point of view may they be regarded as necessary? Or are they not to be regarded as a part of environment? We must either assume that all the actual conditions are necessary, and then the term is entirely superfluous, or that the unnecessary exists by the side of the necessary and forms, of course, also a part of environment. Very likely the exigencies of French syntax and style are mainly responsible for the use of the term *nécessaires* in Comte's definition.

Claude Bernard distinguishes between outer and inner milieu. Here we have either a new interpretation of the term or, more likely, an application of it from a twofold point of view. It is true *l'animal* is affected by the various fluctuations and changes in the state of its body, as well as by the external

conditions of its existence. This aggregate of individual organisms which constitute the body of the animal are the *milieu intérieur dans lequel vivent les éléments des tissus*. It forms the immediate milieu of the different cells; to regard it as the inner milieu of the collective organism, the animal, is indeed a departure, but one which does not make for clearness.

Finot's definition recommends itself by its brevity, clearness and inclusiveness. He states, milieu "includes the sum total of the conditions which accompany the conception and earthly existence of a being, and which end only with its death." It is possible, and it may have been Finot's intention, to include Bernard's *milieu intérieur* in his interpretation. But by doing so, one greatly obscures, if not entirely eliminates, the boundary between heredity and environment, for every trait or propensity inherited from the parents would at the moment of conception merely become an aspect of the *milieu intérieur*.

After discussing the meaning of the term, Koller gives a sketch of the history of the idea of milieu down to the nineteenth century. He finds that mesologic thinking begins with the ancient Hebrew prophets, refers then to Hippocrates and Aristotle and the views which the ancients in general held in regard to the influence of environment, and gives a more detailed exposition of the theories of Ibn Khaldūn, an Arabic statesman and sage of the second half of the fourteenth century. In Europe of the Middle Ages, the idea remained dormant, until the time of the Renaissance, which witnessed its resurrection. The reason for this is obvious. The ancient thinkers were fearless and inquisitive, and unhampered by any preconceived ideas or a fixed goal. Their observations were scattered and unsystematic, their inclination for philosophical speculation and their impatient desire for a harmonious conception of the universe often led them astray, but some of their deductions based on experience are very clear sighted, though naturally expressed in rudimentary form. Almost two hundred years before Aristotle, Empedocles maintained that the preservation, proficiency and development of all organisms were due to the fitness which they ultimately attained. In the language of the present age this simply means survival of the fittest. With the advent of Christianity a barrier was created for thought and simultaneously a fixed goal was set for which it had to strive. Only the heretics dared to arrive at conclusions which were at variance with the dogma. The importance of the inner life, the life of the soul, as then understood, overshadowed the concrete experiences of existence.

One fundamental idea of those ages was that the universe was governed by an absolutely free will, and that human beings

were relatively free agents. The laws of nature were almost unknown, their universal validity, the infrangible chain of cause and effect were inconceivable to those generations. When Jean Bodin ventured to proclaim that man was dependent on his environment, he took care to postulate the human reason as the absolute part of the mind, and as such not subject to surrounding influences. So it was but natural that he regarded education as the remedy for social ills, as though an environment tending to develop vicious propensities at the expense of the good would not leave its impress upon education. J. G. Kohl,¹ who wrote three centuries later, expresses similar views, though he admits that this seeming independence may be an illusion. Bodin, though a clear and deep thinker, could not entirely free himself from the influence of his times, and so we discover in *De la république*, and especially in his *Démonomanie* (Paris, 1581) a strong leaning to the belief of his age that Satan and his demons had power over the world, and that magic and astrology were true arts.

As the conception of the universe becomes more and more deterministic, the influence of environment upon man is perceived more clearly. Our own age is wholly deterministic as far as western civilization is concerned. The structures of all the natural sciences rests on the assumption that no law of nature is ever suspended, that there exists an unbroken and unbreakable chain of cause and effect. All sociologic and political thought proceeds likewise from these premises. As soon as we see a phenomenon or a series of phenomena which we consider detrimental, we start to seek for the cause or causes and try to remove them.

We may well ask ourselves whether we are not going too far in that direction, for at present man is almost regarded as a machine, and experts of various kind are busily at work to obtain for him the maximum of efficiency, which nine times out of ten means merely a maximum of material productiveness. *Cui bono?*—From a strictly deterministic point of view, all these efforts for and against are absolutely inevitable, without, however, really altering the determined course of events. Previous causes determine the marshalling of opposing forces, the time, the place and the form of the clash, as well as the outcome. The truly philosophical among the determinists

¹ We may mention here that Kohl in his work *Der Rhein* (Leipsic, 1851) pointed out what role the rivers always have played in the development of peoples and nations, referring for illustration not only to the principal rivers of the old world, but also to those of North and South America. He really suggests the theme which Metchnikoff dealt with in detail in *Les civilisations et les grands fleuves historique*, confining himself, however, to Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China.

have to admit that their conception of the universe and of life has after all only the value of an hypothesis, indispensable to the sciences, it is true, and daily leading to new advances, but an hypothesis nonetheless. By the side of the determined material world, they recognize something undetermined, which is able to modify the results produced by purely natural causes, that is to say, they postulate the freedom of the will, thereby keeping open to mankind the way to progress, however great the obstacles with which it may be beset. In regard to human society as a whole, it is safe to say that logical thinking is a rare vice. So most people are entirely unaware of any dilemma and optimistically proceed to extricate themselves from the mire by their own bootstraps, as it were. Their optimism, from what ever source it may issue, is a valuable asset in the struggle for higher ideals.

In the main part of his monograph Koller considers the advance made during the nineteenth century, taking the reader up to the present. He has here only dealt with authors on anthropogeography and certain aspects of history. In this field the theory of environment was first applied. The influences of geographical factors are still most potent, but in our age man has developed considerable efficiency in modifying the influences of geographical environment to suit his needs; other aspects of the theory of milieu have assumed equal or even greater importance in our minds. Koller is aware of the fact and has planned to continue the survey of the history of the theory of environment in the field of biology, jurisprudence, economics, anthropology, sociology, literature, and even physics. Since these discussions are "shortly to follow the present one," he will have to confine himself to a mere outline, as in the present case. Considered as an outline his study is a valuable guide for investigation and a good summary of the development in anthropo-geography up to date. The most important authors and phases have been briefly characterized, and what at first glance seems like an omission, as for instance the absence of the name of Charles Darwin, who by his theories did more than any one else to bring the concept 'environment' before the educated world over finds its explanation in Koller's plan. One thing stands out very clearly: the history of the theory of environment runs strictly parallel to the history of the human mind.

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